



## The New Federal Triple Play: The TargetGov Rule of Three Impacts Decision-maker Meetings

By Gloria Larkin

It is widely known that federal contracts are affected by the Rule of Two, which is described in the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Section 19.502-2(b). This rule can be advantageous to both large and small business depending on the company's ability to effectively market the firm's abilities, capacity, and experience to decision-makers before the proposal is released.

What stops most large and small firms dead in their tracks are two definitive problems. The first is the difficulty in scheduling a meeting with a decision-maker well before the proposal is published. The second problem is actually getting any revenue-producing business from such a meeting.

There is another, little-known rule which address these problems. However, this rule is unspoken. It is not in the FAR, nor is it an official federal regulation. However, in-the-know companies are using this rule to their distinct advantage. It is called the **TargetGov Rule of Three**.

The **TargetGov Rule of Three** incorporates elements addressing abilities, experience, and decision-maker meetings. When determining how ability lines up with the upcoming contract requirements, it is wise for a contractor to always plan for at least three perfectly aligning abilities or core-competencies. These abilities ideally will match the exact words and phrasing the customer uses in recent awards or upcoming solicitations.

The **TargetGov Rule of Three** second element is experience. The legal phrase in federal contracting describing this is past-performance and the rule here is that to win a contract, one should have at least three examples of past experience exactly matching the stated requirements. The contractor will then minimize risk and have a higher chance of winning a contract by proving they already have done that exact work or sold that exact product not just once, but three times.

The third element to the **TargetGov Rule of Three** directly affects every meeting whether it is with a government employee or another business person. This is to never ask for or hold a meeting with anyone unless three or more upcoming contract opportunities have been identified to discuss. This means to never ask for an "introduction" meeting. Today, government and prime contractor decision-makers have no time for meetings to be introduced to a company and will refuse them virtually all of the time. Instead, if a contractor has done the homework and identified at least three upcoming opportunities through sources sought notices, agency spending forecasts, and previously awarded contracts it will be less challenging to actually ask for and schedule the meeting with either a government or business decision-maker and carry it through to actually bidding and winning a government contract.

The **TargetGov Rule of Three** is critical to success in the government marketplace, and informed contractors who use it consistently will win more contracts in this highly competitive market.

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